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IN THE ~~UNITED STATES~~ PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

**Examiner: Douglas C. Butler**

**CERTIFICATE OF MAILING**

I hereby certify that this paper or fee is being deposited with the United States Postal Service on the date indicated above and is addressed to:

Vida T. Kämpstra

Signature of Person Mailing Paper or Fee

Sir:

On November 23, 2004, the Office mailed an Office Action containing a non-final rejection of claims in the instant patent application.

On May 23, 2005 and within the six month statutory period for reply, applicants mailed a proper reply to the Office Action. The reply to the Office Action included a certificate of mailing under 37 C.F.R. 1.8 indicating that the reply to the Office Action was deposited in first class mail on May 23, 2005. A copy of the referenced reply to the Office Action is attached hereto as Exhibit A.

With the reply to the Office Action referenced above (attached as Exhibit A), applicants submitted a return receipt postcard wherein by the affixed official mailroom stamp dated May 27, 2005 the Office acknowledged receipt of the referenced reply. A copy of the return receipt postcard showing the official mailroom stamp affixed thereto and dated May 27, 2005 is attached hereto as Exhibit B.

From the facts set forth above, it is apparent that the Notice of Abandonment was mailed by the Office prior to actual receipt of the timely filed proper reply to the Office letter mailed November 23, 2004. In view of the premature holding of abandonment, applicants respectfully petition the Commissioner to withdrawal the holding of abandonment under 37 CFR 1.181.

To the extent further information can be provided to expedite the withdraw of the holding of abandonment, it is respectfully requested that the Office contact the undersigned at (312)236-8500.

While it is believed that no fee is required for submission of this petition under 37 CFR 1.181, to the extent any such fee is required for submission of this paper, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge such fee to Deposit Account No. 50-1039.

Serial No. 09/921,359

- 3 -

Respectfully submitted,

COOK, ALEX, MCFARRON, MANZO,  
CUMMINGS & MEHLER, LTD.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael J. McGee", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Michael J. McGee  
Registration No. 43,789

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200 West Adams Street  
Suite 2850  
Chicago, Illinois 60606  
(312) 236-8500

Dated: June 6, 2005

PATENT  
Case 0712-0148

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re application of

**Examiner: Douglas C. Butler**

**Group Art Unit: 3683**

Brent R. Collyer  
Daniel R. Adema

**CERTIFICATE OF MAILING**Date of Deposit May 23, 2005

GROOVED OR RIBBED BUSHING) )  
AND MATING GROOVED OR )  
RIBBED BUSHING RECEIVING )  
BORE INCLUDED WITHIN A )  
SUSPENSION COMPONENT )

**I hereby certify that this paper or fee is being deposited with the United States Postal Service on the date indicated above and is addressed to:**

Mail Stop Amendment  
Commissioner of Patents  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Serial No.: 09/921,359

Vida T. Kampstra

(Typed or Printed Name of Person Mailing Paper or Fee)

Filed: August 2, 2001

Signature of Person Mailing Paper or Fee

## REPLY UNDER 37 CFR 1.111

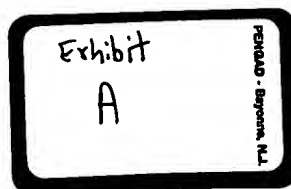
Mail Stop Amendment  
Commissioner of Patents  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

In reply to the Office Action mailed on November 23, 2004 in the above-identified patent application, please amend the application and consider the following remarks, as follows:

**Amendments to the Claims** are reflected in the listing of claims which begins on page 2 of this paper.

**Remarks** begin on page 9 of this paper.



**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (Twice Amended) A suspension component connection assembly, comprising:

a sleeveless bushing having an elastomeric portion and an inner metal component, the elastomeric portion having with first and second opposing axial ends and an inner metal component receiving bore extending axially through it, the bore having a generally uniform diameter throughout its length, said elastomeric portion further having a ribbed portion positioned intermediate said first and second axial ends of said elastomeric portion, said inner metal component having at least a portion thereof received within said bore of said elastomeric portion, said at least a portion of said inner metal component having a generally uniform diameter corresponding to said generally uniform diameter of said bore of said elastomeric portion; and

a suspension component having a bushing receiving bore separate and distinct from said bushing with first and second opposing axial ends, said bushing receiving bore including a groove portion positioned intermediate said first and second axial ends of said suspension component, said ribbed portion of said bushing being adapted to fit within said groove portion of said suspension component.

2. (original) The suspension component connection assembly of claim 1 wherein said suspension component comprises a leaf spring and said bushing receiving bore comprises a leaf spring eye.

3. (original) The suspension component connection assembly of claim 1 wherein said suspension component comprises a shackle assembly.

4. (original) The suspension component connection assembly of claim 1 wherein said sleeveless bushing further comprises a metal sleeve surrounded by said elastomeric portion.

5. (original) The suspension component connection assembly of claim 1 wherein said sleeveless bushing further comprises a pin surrounded by said elastomeric portion.

6. (original) The suspension component connection assembly of claim 1 wherein said bushing receiving bore has an inner diameter with a circumferential length and said groove portion of said suspension component extends substantially along the circumferential length of said inner diameter in its entirety.

7. (original) The suspension component connection assembly of claim 1 wherein said bushing receiving bore has an inner diameter with a circumferential length and said groove portion of said suspension component extends along only a portion of said circumferential length of said inner diameter.

8. (withdrawn) A suspension component connection assembly, comprising:

a suspension component having a bushing receiving bore with first and second opposing axial ends, said bushing receiving bore including a ribbed portion positioned intermediate said first and second axial ends of said suspension component; and  
a sleeveless bushing having an elastomeric portion with

first and second opposing axial ends, said elastomeric portion having a grooved portion positioned intermediate said first and second axial ends of said elastomeric portion, said ribbed portion being adapted to fit within said groove portion of said bushing.

9. (withdrawn) The suspension component connection assembly of claim 8 wherein said suspension component comprises a leaf spring and said bushing receiving bore comprises a leaf spring eye.

10. (withdrawn) The suspension component connection assembly of claim 8 wherein said suspension component comprises a shackle assembly.

11. (withdrawn) The suspension component connection assembly of claim 8 wherein said sleeveless bushing further comprises a metal sleeve surrounded by said elastomeric portion.

12. (withdrawn) The suspension component connection assembly of claim 8 wherein said sleeveless bushing further comprises a pin surrounded by said elastomeric portion.

13. (withdrawn) The suspension component connection assembly of claim 8 wherein said bushing receiving bore has an inner diameter with a circumferential length and said ribbed portion of said suspension component extends substantially along the circumferential length of said inner diameter in its entirety.

14. (withdrawn) A suspension component connection assembly, comprising:

a suspension component having a bushing receiving bore with

first and second opposing axial ends, said bushing receiving bore including a slot portion positioned intermediate said first and second axial ends of said suspension component; and

a sleeveless bushing having an elastomeric portion with first and second opposing axial ends, said elastomeric portion having a protrusion positioned intermediate said first and second axial ends of said elastomeric portion, said protrusion being adapted to fit within said slot of said suspension component.

15. (withdrawn) The suspension component connection assembly of claim 14 wherein said suspension component comprises a leaf spring and said bushing receiving bore comprises a leaf spring eye.

16. (withdrawn) The suspension component connection assembly of claim 14 wherein said sleeveless bushing further comprises a metal sleeve surrounded by said elastomeric portion.

17. (withdrawn) The suspension component connection assembly of claim 14 wherein said sleeveless bushing further comprises a pin surrounded by said elastomeric portion.

18. (withdrawn) A suspension component connection assembly, comprising:

a suspension component having a bushing receiving bore with first and second opposing axial ends, said bushing receiving bore including a hole positioned intermediate said first and second axial ends of said suspension component; and

a sleeveless bushing having an elastomeric portion with first and second opposing axial ends, said elastomeric portion having a protrusion positioned intermediate said first and



second axial ends of said elastomeric portion, said protrusion being adapted to fit within said hole of said suspension component.

19. (withdrawn) The suspension component connection assembly of claim 18 wherein said suspension component comprises a leaf spring and said bushing receiving bore comprises a leaf spring eye.

20. (withdrawn) The suspension component connection assembly of claim 18 wherein said sleeveless bushing further comprises a metal sleeve surrounded by said elastomeric portion.

21. (withdrawn) The suspension component connection assembly of claim 18 wherein said sleeveless bushing further comprises a pin surrounded by said elastomeric portion.

22. (new) A suspension component connection assembly, comprising:

a sleeveless bushing having an elastomeric portion with first and second opposing axial ends, said elastomeric portion having a ribbed portion positioned intermediate said first and second axial ends of said elastomeric portion, said sleeveless bushing further comprising a pin surrounded by said elastomeric portion; and

a suspension component having a bushing receiving bore separate and distinct from said bushing with first and second opposing axial ends, said bushing receiving bore including a groove portion positioned intermediate said first and second axial ends of said suspension component, said ribbed portion of said bushing being adapted to fit within said groove portion of said suspension component.

23. (new) The suspension component connection assembly of claim 22 wherein said suspension component comprises a leaf spring and said bushing receiving bore comprises a leaf spring eye.

24. (new) The suspension component connection assembly of claim 22 wherein said suspension component comprises a shackle assembly.

25. (new) The suspension component connection assembly of claim 22 wherein said bushing receiving bore has an inner diameter with a circumferential length and said groove portion of said suspension component extends substantially along the circumferential length of said inner diameter in its entirety.

26. (new) The suspension component connection assembly of claim 22 wherein said bushing receiving bore has an inner diameter with a circumferential length and said groove portion of said suspension component extends along only a portion of said circumferential length of said inner diameter.

27. (new) A suspension component connection assembly, comprising:

- a sleeveless bushing having an elastomeric portion with first and second opposing axial ends, said elastomeric portion having a ribbed portion positioned intermediate said first and second axial ends of said elastomeric portion; and

- a suspension component having a bushing receiving bore separate and distinct from said bushing with first and second opposing axial ends, said bushing receiving bore including a groove portion positioned intermediate said first and second

axial ends of said suspension component, said ribbed portion of said bushing being adapted to fit within said groove portion of said suspension component, said bushing receiving bore having an inner diameter with a circumferential length and said groove portion of said suspension component extending along only a portion of said circumferential length of said inner diameter.

28. (new) The suspension component connection assembly of claim 27 wherein said suspension component comprises a leaf spring and said bushing receiving bore comprises a leaf spring eye.

29. (new) The suspension component connection assembly of claim 27 wherein said suspension component comprises a shackle assembly.

30. (new) The suspension component connection assembly of claim 27 wherein said sleeveless bushing further comprises a metal sleeve surrounded by said elastomeric portion.

31. (new) The suspension component connection assembly of claim 27 wherein said sleeveless bushing further comprises a pin surrounded by said elastomeric portion.

REMARKS

Prior to directly providing a reply to the subject Office Action, applicants would like to clarify a simple issue regarding the instant application. In particular, it is noted that a sleeveless bushing is one that eliminates the outer metal sleeve. With respect to the inner metal component, in a sleeveless bushing, that component is not restricted to being a sleeve. For example, as indicated in the instant patent application, a pin can be used.

Turning now to the subject Office Action, claims 1-7 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Reed (Great Britain Patent No. 732, 436). By the present reply, applicants have amended claim 1 in order to further clarify the present invention. In addition, applicants have added claims 22-31 and note that claims 8-21 were withdrawn from consideration.

While it is believed that Reed does not teach the subject invention for other reasons as well, applicants have amended claim 1 and indicated that the inner metal component receiving bore of the elastomeric portion of the sleeveless bushing has a generally uniform diameter throughout its length. Further, applicants have indicated that the inner metal component has at least a portion thereof received within the bore, which portion has a generally uniform diameter corresponding to the generally uniform diameter of the bore.

Clearly, Reed does not teach or suggest these features. In particular, as illustrated in Fig. 6b of the Reed patent, the inner metal component shown therein does not maintain a generally uniform diameter. Likewise, the inner metal component receiving bore does not maintain a generally uniform diameter.

For least these reasons, applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claim 1 under 35 USC 102(b).

New independent claim 22 corresponds to a combination of the subject matter of prior independent claim 1 and prior dependent claim 5. New claims 23-27 are dependent upon new independent claim 22.

It is respectfully submitted that Reed does not teach or suggest use of a sleeveless bushing having a pin surrounded by its elastomeric portion. In fact, Reed notably teaches away from such subject matter, indicating that inner element 11 is expanded by inserting a hollow mandrel within it. (See page 3, lines 54-89). It would be impossible to insert a hollow mandrel within a pin surrounded by an elastomer. For at least these reasons, applicants respectfully request an indication of allowability of claims 22-26.

New independent claim 27 corresponds to the subject matter of prior independent claim 1 and prior dependent claim 7. New claims 28-31 are dependent upon new independent claim 27.

It is respectfully submitted that Reed does not teach or suggest that the groove portion of the suspension component extends only along a portion of the circumferential length of the inner diameter of the bushing receiving bore of that component. For at least these reasons, applicants respectfully request an indication of allowability of new claims 27-31.

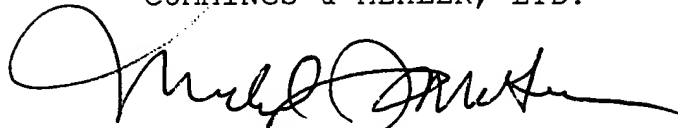
In view of the foregoing, applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection under 35 USC 102(b). Additionally, applicants respectfully request a notice of allowance of claims 1-7 and 22-31 of the instant application. Early and favorable action is hereby solicited.

Serial No. 09/921,359

- 11 -

Respectfully submitted,

COOK, ALEX, MCFARRON, MANZO,  
CUMMINGS & MEHLER, LTD.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael J. McGee", written over a horizontal line.

Michael J. McGee

Registration No. 43,789

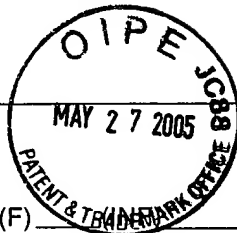
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Dated: May 23, 2005

THE U.S. PATENT & TRADEMARK OFFICE  
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HERETO, ACKNOWLEDGES RECEIPT OF:

ENCLOSURES:

- ( ) Application \_\_\_\_\_  
( ) Specification \_\_\_\_\_ pages  
( ) Claims \_\_\_\_\_ pages  
( ) Abstract \_\_\_\_\_ page(s)  
( ) Drawing Sheets no. \_\_\_\_\_ (F)  
( ) Transmittal Letter  
(✓) Check \$ 1020.00 No: 20470  
( ) Declaration/Oath  
( ) Assignment and Cover Sheet  
( ) Information Disclosure Statement  
(✓) Response/Amendment Reply Under 37 CFR 1.111  
( ) Extension of Time (In Duplicate)  
( ) Small Entity Status  
( ) Copy of Priority Document  
( ) \_\_\_\_\_  
( ) \_\_\_\_\_



RE: APPLICATION ATTY/SEC: MJMc/vk  
File no: 0712-0148

Applicant: Collyer & Adema

S.N.: 09/921,359 Filing Date: August 2, 2001

Title: Grooved Or Ribbed Bushing  
and Mating Grooved or Ribbed...

Due date: May 23, 2005 Date Sent: May 23, 2005

